

# ghostses

## a duo

each performer reads and plays a batterie of instruments including:

- an assortment of tuning forks (random pitches) and acoustic resonators
- an am/fm radio
- a harmonica or similar reed instrument
- a kitchen timer/bell
- a variety of little percussion instruments (rocks, toys, etc.)

## the corpus

an excerpt of a text by W.G. Sebald. initial performances used most of Chapter 1 from The Rings of Saturn.

the corpus is separated into multiple files (layers) via a Python program. one layer contains all text (the background layer) and is printed on white paper. numerous foreground layers contain filtered, colored portions of the text (currently organized into parts of speech) printed on transparencies.

## stack(s)

a stack is created by combining (stacking) two or more foreground layers on top of a background layer. for example, a possible page 1 stack (with background, adjective, noun, and symbol layers):

It was Janine who referred me to the surgeon Anthony Batty Shaw, whom she knew from the Oxford Society, when after my discharge from hospital I began my enquiries about Thomas Browne, who had practised as a doctor in Norwich in the seventeenth century and had left a number of writings that defy all comparison. An entry in the 1911 edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica had told me that Browne's skull was kept in the museum of the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital. Unequivocal though this claim appeared, my attempts to locate the skull in the very place where until recently I had been a patient met with no success, for none of the ladies and gentlemen of the present administrative staff at the hospital was aware that any such museum existed. Not only did they stare at me in utter incomprehension when I voiced my strange request, but I even had the impression that some of those I asked thought of me as an eccentric crank. Yet it is well known that in the period when public health and hygiene were being reformed and hospitals established, many of these institutions kept museums, or rather chambers of horrors, in which prematurely born, deformed or hydrocephalic fetuses, hypertrophied organs, and other items of a similar nature were preserved in jars of formaldehyde, for medical purposes, and occasionally exhibited to the public. The question was where the things had got to. The local history section of the main library, which has since been destroyed by fire, was unable to give me any information concerning the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital and the whereabouts of Browne's skull. It was not until I made

performers are encouraged to change the number and selection of foreground layers for each stack. a sequence of stacks may be arranged in any order.

## reading (silently, aloud)

progression through each stack is dictated by each performer's silent reading of the background layer (normal reading rate, normal progression through the page [top to bottom, left to right], reading rate not/loosely coordinated). upon arriving at a word on a foreground layer, performers read that word aloud and up to one or two words directly proceeding and/or following (or both proceeding and following).

reading volume of both performers should be generally balanced/nearly even.

## action(s)

performers assign a category from their batterie to each foreground layer (for example: nouns refer to radio, verbs to tuning forks, etc.). upon arriving at a word on a foreground layer performers execute the corresponding action and simultaneously read that word aloud. reading volume and the volume of ones action should be generally balanced/nearly even.

the duration of each action is dictated by each performer's silent reading of the background layer as well as the distance between pairs of words on the same foreground layer. for example (assuming nouns are radios):

background layer	It	was	Janine	who	referred	me	to	the	surgeon	Anthony	Batty	Shaw
read	silent	silent	aloud	silent	silent	silent	silent	silent	aloud	aloud	aloud	aloud
radio (noun)	off	off	on	on	on	on	on	on	off	on	off	on

the first noun (Janine) indicates the start of radio action, which continues until a second noun (surgeon), the utterance of which demarcates an end to radio action.

## exceptions, additions

the symbols/punctuation layer is the only layer wherein marks on the transparency are not read aloud.

radios with mechanical tuning dials, in which the station may be changed while the radio is off, are preferred. change the dial after every "off."

## complications

(forthcoming) if synchronicity of X: loop

~

*a loosely coordinated distortion*

~